GENERAL INFORMATION

Aims: Essential deepening of students' knowledge of notions of sociology of interaction and theoretical challenges deriving from electronically mediated encounters.

Teaching: The course will be taught through ten two-hour lecture sessions, on Tuesdays from 4 to 5.50pm, in CMB. Seminars will start in week 2. They will take place on Tuesdays either from 2—2.50pm or from 3-3.50pm in Pod 5.

Overview: Overview: Is Internet changing sociology? How are core assumptions embedded in the received notions of interaction and situatedness challenged by electronically mediated encounters and fields such as social media sites and other upcoming Web 2.0 technologies? Social scientists are after a general theory of all types of interaction and try to avoid what might be called “flip flop” social analysis: one form of sociology for studying the offline world and then “flip” to another for the online world. The tendency to conceive of the digital as simply and exclusively digital and the non-digital as simply and exclusively that, filters out alternative conceptualizations, thereby precluding a more complex reading of the impact of digitization on material and place-bound conditions. The course is composed of three parts: (1) one theoretical, (2) one case-based and (3) one more practical and project-based.

The first component of the course is theoretical. It will provide reasons why flip flop social analyses have to be avoided and an overview of the different scholarly attempts to avoid so. First, we will discuss perspectives by which when it comes to the online world no major shift of sociological framing is required. According to the proponents of this perspective, this is due either because the consequences of Internet for the social life, and for social theory, have been exaggerated or because offline interaction can be equally technologically mediated. In this case, familiar notions from the sociology of interaction such as “co-presence”, “increments”, “reciprocation” “imitative behaviour” “norms”, “commitments”, “obligations”, “value” and “reputations” are conceived to be of use in studying online worlds.
Secondly, we will review authors arguing that the assumptions that have characterized much micro-sociological thinking in the past are theoretically no longer adequate in a world in which interaction can also be disembedded from local spaces. In this latter case, notions that draw on microsociology have to be extended to capture global social forms. A distinction between embodied presence and response presence will be introduced, together with the notion of face-to-screen situation.

Finally, we will introduce a framework that allows the study of how global information infrastructures and new form of internet-generated data practices affect micro-interaction. The approach is called Institutional Ethnography (Smith, 2005;2006) and it is suggested as a lens through which it is possible to appreciate and study ways in which predetermined texts, as in social media sites templates and algorithms, may or may not infuse what happens when a speaker engages an audience.

The **case based component** of the course will host presentation concerning internet-based types of interactions such as (1) social media sites (2) mobile communication (3) video-conferencing (4) self-tracking including.

The **project-based component** of the course is a 10 hours tutorial offering examples of application of institutional ethnography. The tutor will also guide students to use of institutional ethnography to their own internet-based interaction case studies.

**Convener:**

Dr Gian Marco Campagnolo. STIS; Old Surgeons Hall, High School Yards, room 2.02. tel: 651 4273; email: g.campagnolo@ed.ac.uk; **office hours: Thur 12am-1pm**

**Tutor:**

Órla Meadhbh Murray, PhD Candidate, Sociology, School of Social and Political Science, University of Edinburgh; MURRAY Órla S0807012@sms.ed.ac.uk

**Course secretary:**

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Course Overview

- week 1: Course Introduction
- week 2: the “no major shift of sociological framing” thesis
- week 3: the “internet Hype” thesis
- week 4: Cases - Self-tracking
- week 5: the “some adjustments” thesis (I)
- week 6: the “some adjustments” thesis (II);
- week 7: Cases – Social Networking Sites;
- week 8: Cases – Mobile Communication;
- week 9: Cases – Video Conferencing;
- week 10: Conclusions on the course theme and discussion.

Tutorials

The class will be split in two groups to attend tutorials on Institutional Ethnography. Tutorials will be delivered in Pod 5 a the following times:

Tuesday 21st January: Group 1: 2-3pm
                      Group 2: 3-4pm

Tuesday 28th January: Group 2:2-3pm
                      Group 1:3-4pm

3 subgroups for each Group will be formed and one Tutorial on “how to apply Institutional Ethnography to your research” will be delivered to each sub-group in one of the following slots. Tutorials are in Pod 5:

- tue 11 feb: 3-4pm Group 1A
- tue 25 feb: 3-4pm Group 2A
- tue 4 mar: 3-4pm Group 1B
- tue 11 mar: 3-4pm Group 2B
- tue 18 mar: 3-4pm Group 1C
- tue 25 mar: 3-4pm Group 2C

To contribute to, and gain from, the sessions, you must read in advance the ‘key’ readings for each lecture topic.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Critical understanding of received notions of sociology of interaction deriving from micro-sociology and ethnomethodology.

By the end of the course students will:

- gain a critical understanding of received notions of sociology of interaction deriving from micro-sociology and ethnomethodology;
- understand the relevance of institutional ethnography for the study of mediated interaction.
Transferable skills
Clear understanding of the ways theoretical analysis changes and adapts in the light of the emergence of new empirical phenomena.

Final Essay topics
Please discuss and finalise your essay topic with the course convenor.

ELMA
Course work will be submitted online using our submission system - ELMA. You will not be required to submit a paper copy. Marked course work, grades and feedback will be returned online - you will not receive a paper copy of your marked course work or feedback. For information, help and advice on submitting coursework and accessing feedback, please see the ELMA wiki at

https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/SPSuitWiki/ELMA

Course Work Hand in Dates
25% short essay - Week 5 Monday 10th February
75% long essay - Monday 28th April.

Short Essay word limit
Your short essay should be between 1400-1600 words. Essays above 1,600 words will be penalized using the Ordinary level criterion of 1 mark for every 20 words over length: anything between 1,601 and 1,620 words will lose one point, between 1,621 and 1,640 two points, and so on. Note that the lower 1400 figure is a guideline for students which you will not be penalized for going below. However, you should note that shorter essays are unlikely to achieve the required depth and that this will be reflected in your mark.

Long Essay word limit
Your long essay should be between 3,500 and 4,500 words (excluding bibliography). Essays above 4,500 words will be penalized using the Ordinary level criterion of 1 mark for every 20 words over length: anything between 4,501 and 4,520 words will lose one point, between 4,521 and 4,540 two points, and so on. Note that the lower 3,500 figure is a guideline for students which you will not be penalized for going below. However, you should note that shorter essays are unlikely to achieve the required depth and that this will be reflected in your mark.

Late submission of Essay
The School of Social & Political Science does not operate a system of ‘extensions’. If you are submitting an essay late you should also complete a Late Penalty Waiver (LPW) form explaining any mitigating circumstances.

In the absence of a LPW, or where a LPW is submitted without a genuine case for mitigation late penalties will be applied.
Note that if you do have good reason for being late with an essay, and you provide adequate evidence explaining this, you will not be penalised!

Please see the Sociology Honours handbook for full details of our procedures. This can be downloaded from:  
http://www.sps.ed.ac.uk/undergrad/subject_and_programme_specific_information/sociology/honours

**Academic Misconduct In Submission of Essays**
Coursework submitted to the UTO will be regarded as the final version for marking. Where there is evidence that the wrong piece of work has been deliberately submitted to subvert hand-in deadlines - e.g. in a deliberately corrupted file - the matter may be treated as a case of misconduct and be referred to the School Academic Misconduct Officer. The maximum penalty can be a mark of 0% (zero). Please note that a mark of zero may have very serious consequences for your degree.

**Plagiarism**
You must ensure that you understand what the University regards as plagiarism and why the University takes it seriously. All cases of suspected plagiarism, or other forms of academic misconduct, will be reported to the School Academic Misconduct Officer. You'll find further information in the Sociology Honours handbook, and at the following site:

http://www.sps.ed.ac.uk/undergrad/honours/what_is_plagiarism
Key Readings:

**Week 1:**

**Week 2:**


**Week 3:**

**Week 4:**


**Week 5:**

**Week 6:**


**Week 7:**

Week 8:


Week 9:

Week 10:

Tutorial: